



Vivian, Siobhan. **The List**. 2012. 333 p.

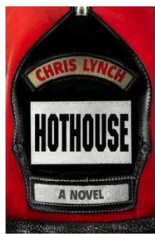
Recommended for Grades 9-12  
*Realistic Fiction*

Every year eight girls at Mount Washington High School are victimized by The List. The List announces the four prettiest and the four ugliest girls in high school. Four girls get all the popularity they could ask for but four other girls must learn to cope with the pain. Abby, Lauren, Bridget, and Margo are relatively happy about their popularity but will it get the best of them. Danielle, Candace, Sarah, and Jennifer now have to deal with the instant popularity, only it's not for the right reasons. Aside from The List, there is prom queen voting, eating disorders, "new girl" problems, failing classes, losing friends, and boyfriend troubles. One girl even takes the route of smoking and making bad decisions. Everyone at Mount Washington has their suspicions of who made The List, but do they really know who did it?

**The List** is an easy read. It's enjoyable and really shows the problems of high school students. It is written from the perspective of eight different characters: Danielle, Abby, Sarah, Bridget, Lauren, Candace, Jennifer, and Margo. It may be confusing at first because it does not tell you who the chapter is about right away (only in some cases); however, the way the chapters are written shows you more about each character. The content of the book seems disorganized at first, but it really shows you how being called ugly, or even pretty in some cases, can destroy your social life for a long time. The language, choices, and events in this book would probably be best for kids in high school.

by Moira Senff

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Lynch, Chris. **Hothouse**. 2010. p 198

Recommended for Grades 6-12  
*Realistic Fiction*

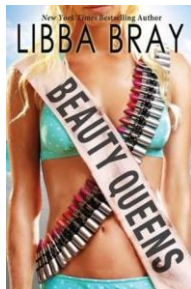
Russell is the son of a firefighter and has been raised in the firefighter community. His close friend, who he has fallen out of sorts with, DJ, is also the son of a firefighter and the two have been living parallel lives. Russell's dream is to be a firefighter just like his father who he is very close to. He loves the firefighter camaraderie and knows that he is destined to be a part of it. Tragedy strikes Russell and his mother when Russell's father, David James, is killed in a fire along with DJ's father. Russell and DJ are thrust into the limelight as the sons of heroes and are revered throughout the community, but when new information is revealed about the fire that killed their fathers the community becomes disgusted with their respected heroes. This novel follows the ups and downs of children of heroes and how they deal with their grief.

Overall this was a good novel. The main character was realistic and relatable and the flashbacks provided more depth to his relationship with his father. Lynch took on a deep

topic and tackled it very well. You could feel Russell's pain over the death of his father and how he related to the community through various stages of the aftermath of his father's death. Although the novel was short, it was slow moving and took a long time to get to the turning point of the book. Some characters' roles could have been bigger, such as Russell's mother, who played an insignificant role. Some aspects of the book were not well explained, such as the circumstances around Russell's and DJ's dads' deaths. This was a short, average read. I would suggest it for middle school or high school students interested in a quick read with plot depth.

- Elizabeth Teen Reviewer

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Bray, Libba. **Beauty Queens** 2011 396p.

Recommended for Grades 6-12

*Realistic Fiction*

Beauty Queens by Libba Bray tells a story of fifty Miss Teen Dream Pageant contestants whose plane crashes on a deserted island, leaving the survivors with “little food, little water and practically no eye liner.” Away from makeup stores, plastic surgeons, and tanning salons, the girls need to hunt for food, find water and make shelter. The beauty Queens still have to practice dance routines and answer questions for the question and answer part of the pageant. The girls go through many challenges such as giant snakes, pirates, and an evil corporation before it's down to only twelve Queens left. Miss Texas is the total pageant beauty always practicing, waiting for someone to come and rescue them. Miss New Hampshire is the total opposite of Miss Texas. The only reason she entered was to take down the pageant. Miss Nebraska owns a chastity ring to temper her wild side. Miss Rhode Island is transgender. Then there is Miss California who is an Indian immigrant. Will these beauty queens survive?

The writing style of this book is very comical. The book has fun extras like commercial breaks, classified information and fun facts about the Miss Teen Dreamers, which draws the reader in to keep reading. I think Beauty Queens is a good book for any teenage girl to read, middle or high school. The characters have personalities and problems that a lot of teen girls can relate to. Beauty Queens is definitely a book worth reading. It has comedy, drama and action all in one book.

By Amie

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Zarr, Sara. **How to Save a Life** 2011. 341pgs.

Recommended for Grades 9-12

*Realistic Fiction*

The day that Jill MacSweeney's father passed away in a sudden car accident was the day that would change her life forever. It was as if in a way Jill died that day too. She began pushing away all the people that wished to be close to her, her boyfriend, her best friends and even her own mother. But Jill's mother, Robin, had a different way of dealing with the grief and when she made the decision to adopt a baby Jill couldn't help but feel that her mother was somehow trying to replace their lost family member with someone entirely new. And then there is Mandy, the young teenager carrying the baby Robin longs for, a baby whose father she isn't even sure of. Mandy knows how it feels to grow up feeling unwanted by a mother who never intended to have her so when she too becomes pregnant she only wishes that the baby can grow up with a better life than her own, to be loved unconditionally and forever. After communicating through email Robin agrees to take Mandy in until the baby is born. As Robin comforts Mandy and so easily accepts her into her home Mandy finally begins to realize just how it feels to belong to a real family. But Mandy, who is just chasing after the mother who never wanted her, can't help but wonder after the baby is born if she will ever have someone to care for her too. At first Jill hates the idea of Mandy and the baby, for Mandy herself has a few secrets she just can't seem to explain. However, slowly but surely, Jill and Mandy's very different lives begin to intertwine as they both begin to find their place in the world and realize that letting go of the past is the only way to be ready for what's to come.

Told from both the eyes of Jill and of Mandy the reader is able to recognize both girls' perspectives and truly get a chance to connect with their two very deviating lives all the way up to the very last page. This unforgettable, heart-wrenching story tells of first love, second chances, and the everlasting need of a true family.

~ Gianna

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Condie, Ally. **Matched.** 2010. 366p.

Recommended for Grades 8 and up  
*Science Fiction*

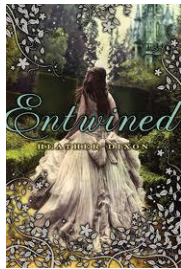
Life within the Society is perfectly planned, right down to your occupation, your partner, and the day of your death. When seventeen year old Cassia is matched with her best friend, she can't imagine a more perfect scenario. However, when she encounters a glitch in the system she can't help but start questioning the Society and if their motives really are best for everyone. After her grandfather dies, he leaves her with a poem that was supposed to be destroyed and is prohibited to be read. Cassia is drawn to Ky, an Aberration, and they begin to teach each other aspects of the past that were forbidden by the Society and she eventually learns about his traumatizing past. The rebellious teen continues to learn more about the dystopian

society and discovers information that could harm Ky. In a desperate attempt to save him, Cassia is now left outsmarted by the Society and relocated to another province, longing to be reunited with her true match.

Matched is a gripping story that includes an original idea and various genres. The suspense and mystery behind the Society and the struggle to find herself was thrilling and keeps the reader guessing. The love triangle, while they are commonly found in more popular stories, was differently approached in this story. As the first book in the Matched trilogy, the story is a great introduction to the characters and plot and makes the reader want to continue and find out what Ally Condie has thought of next. The chapters are not drawn out, but include enough action and entertainment to keep the reader from putting the book down.

– Nicole, Teen Reviewer.

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Dixon, Heather. **Entwined**. 2011. 472 p.

Recommended for Grades 9-12  
*Fantasy*

Heather Dixon brings the fairy tale, *The Twelve Dancing Princesses*, to the young adult level in her novel *Entwined*. Azalea and her eleven younger sisters love to dance, but when their mother dies they are forced into mourning and dancing is no longer allowed. Azalea's and the princess' relationship with the King, their father, deteriorates due to differences in their view of mourning. Mourning, to the King is very important and a symbol of respect. The princesses, however, wish to cherish their mother's lively spirit by dancing the dances their mother taught them. The sisters long to dance and find a way to do so when they discover a secret passageway in their bedroom. Every night the sisters go through the passageway to a land created by Keeper, a magical man who allows them to dance there; however, when the Keeper starts to take things and keep them, troubles befalls the princesses. The Keeper is not who he seems to be.

Overall this was a really great novel for those who like fantasy or fairy tales. The book kept the themes of magic, romance and mystery prevalent which are all components of a classic fairy tale. Although there were many princesses, each one had their own personality or a trait that set them apart from the rest. The Keeper and King were however the most unique characters and really stood out. The novel could be slow at times, especially towards the middle of the book, when the same events happen over and over. Besides that, the novel was true to the original fairy tale with some flair of its own and was an enjoyable read.

- Elizabeth Teen Reviewer

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Fisher, Catherine. **Incarceron**. 2007. 458p.

Recommended for Grades 8-12

*Science Fiction*

The protagonist of the book *Incarceron* is a young boy who goes by the name of Finn. He is a prisoner in Incarceron, which is a futuristic high-grade prison. The prison is said to be alive, watching over the prisoners, hearing and seeing everything they do. Finn doesn't remember why he is in the prison, and he doesn't remember his life outside the prison. Some people don't think there is an outside to the prison. Throughout the book he has visions of a little boy, and he believes they're memories of his life. Finn has a tattoo of an eagle on his wrist, and he doesn't know what it means. One day he finds a crystal key with the same eagle on it that's on his wrist. Claudia, a young girl whose father is the warden of Incarceron, is tired of all of the secrets about the prison being kept from her. One day she goes into her father's office and discovers a crystal key, with a hologram of an eagle on it. Claudia and Finn use these keys to communicate with each other throughout the book, while they plan Finn's escape from Incarceron.

*Incarceron* is a very well written book, and I enjoyed reading it. It kept me entertained; I was never bored while reading it. Though it was long, it was not hard to get through. It is suspenseful and clever. I really liked the characters, they were interesting and well developed. You continued to learn more about their lives and personalities throughout the book. It was easy to follow along with the circumstances in your head because it was very descriptive. I really understood what it was like to be in the characters' situation. I would recommend this book to girls and boys ages 13 and up. I think it can hold the attention of people of any age, but readers younger than 13 might have trouble understanding it.

– Nicole

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Cameron, Sharon. **The Dark Unwinding**. 2013. 318p.

Recommended for Grades 9-12

*Mystery*

In *The Dark Unwinding*, Katharine Tulman is sent by her greedy Aunt Alice to her uncle's estate, with the orders to declare her uncle unfit to manage the estate and send him to an insane asylum. Upon her arrival, Katharine finds not a few servants, but an entire town of people that would be kicked out of their homes by Aunt Alice's instructions. With the townspeople- Lane Moreau, Mrs. Jefferies, Ben Aldridge, and others- trying to change her mind, Katharine has one month to decide whether she will risk her inheritance and help her lovable

uncle, or lose everything by saving his estate. At the same time, another, more sinister being is plotting to steal her uncle's whimsical inventions, and Katharine begins to have doubts about her own state of mind.

Sharon Cameron brings her characters to life in the way she describes their oddities and strong, unique personalities. Though the beginning of the novel is rather slow and almost stuffy, it quickly becomes enchanting with its spooky, gothic air and sudden bright moments. The author seems to leave the reader hanging with a sudden ending, though she answers most of the mysteries the characters uncover. Its full and imaginative plot will draw reluctant readers into the book. Middle school readers may enjoy this story, but it seems to be geared toward older teenagers. Quirky and eerie at the same time, *The Dark Unwinding* lives up to its name.

- Christine

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Johnson, Maureen. **Suite Scarlett**. 2008. 353 p.

Recommended for Grades 7-12  
*Realistic Fiction*

Interesting events are always in store at the Hopewell Hotel, and on Scarlett's fifteenth birthday she can only pray they will be outstanding. Unfortunately, things take an immediate turn for the worst, as the family owned hotel is falling, rather plummeting, into financial trouble. In a stroke of luck, a new wealthy guest, Mrs. Amberson checks in for the entire summer and is staying in the room Scarlett is assigned to take care of. As Scarlett becomes her new assistant, she also plays the role of her older brother Spencer's right hand gal as she preps him for a new role in a theatrical production. She is introduced to his partner in the play, Eric, whom she immediately is attracted to. As the feelings are slowly returned, her relationship with Spencer is put on the rocks, and soon after, so is her relationship with Eric. As problems arise in the world of show business, Scarlett finds herself having to solve problems for not only her, but for others as well. As her whole life turns into a balancing act, Scarlett is pulled into a world of insanity that might just help her find what she really wants her future to be.

The witty sense of humor Johnson illustrates in the book, especially between Scarlett and Spencer, is a feature that will allure the reader without a doubt. The story is full of conflicts that are tangled together in some way. The way the problems all seem to fall into place as a resolution is made is enticing to read and will keep the reader enthralled as the plot unfolds. The book is divided into Acts, each containing chapters, which is wonderfully thought of on Johnson's part. Thespians would appreciate the content of this book and how Maureen Johnson makes the stage come alive on paper.

-Nicole, Teen Reviewer.

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Caletti, Deb. **Stay**. 2011. 313p.

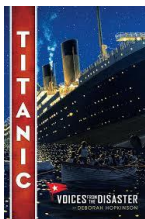
Recommended for Grades 9-12  
*Realistic Fiction*

Once deeply in love, protagonist Clara thought she and her boyfriend Christian were meant for each other. Sadly after 1 ½ years dating Christian shows that his loyalty and devotion can quickly turn into jealousy and obsession, and Clara finds herself leaving her friends behind, moving to a far-away sea town with her father to escape the potentially dangerous stalking actions of her now ex-boyfriend. Clara and her father both face their fears in the metaphorical places of Deception Pass and Possession Point, and prove that with each other they could conquer any troubles they face, all the while meeting new people and increasing the chances of falling in love again. As soon as Clara started feeling safe again in the comfort of her new friends Jack and Finn, the text messages, voicemails, and emails started to appear again, completely turning the tables on her comfort. The contact from her ex-boyfriend never truly stopped but instead Christian took it to the next level and came for a visit. Scared out of her mind Clara went to the one place she knew he would not follow her, the place where her mother went many years back to escape her depression.

This brilliantly written book goes back and forth from the past and the present leaving suspenseful cliffhangers in almost every chapter. This format insures that the book will always be interesting and intriguing. This book would appeal to high school leveled readers, and could be inspirational to readers who have dealt with teenage love gone wrong and problems needed to be solved. *Stay* is quite an easy read although it has some unresolved subplots (this reviewer is insistent to know what happens to Clara's father and Slyvie). This is a great read and will make you feel like you are a part of the book and leaves the readers wanting more.

—Shannon , *Teen Reviewer*.

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Hopkinson, Deborah. **Titanic: Voices from the Disaster**. 2012 289p.

Recommended for Grades 6-12

Non- Fiction

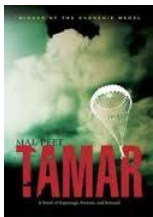
The Titanic was built in Belfast, Ireland, by the shipbuilding firm of Harland and Wolff especially for the White Star Line steamship company. The Titanic cost 7.5 million. She was registered on March 25, 1912. Her weight was listed at 46,328.57 tons- just over a thousand more than the Olympic. The Titanic was scheduled to go from Southampton, UK to New York City, NY. She left on April 10, 1912. On the 4th day of sailing, at 11:40 P.M. the Titanic hit a huge iceberg, which caused water to enter the ship

and eventually sink. On April 15, 1912 more than 1,500 people died when the Titanic finally sank at about 2:20 A.M. and there was an estimate of 705 survivors. There were not enough lifeboats on the ship to save everyone. Women and children were put on the lifeboats first and then men.

People that sailed on the Titanic were not ever worried about this ship sinking because they thought it was almost impossible for such a massive ship to sink. On the boat, passengers were split into three classes: first class, second class, and third class. Most of the people that were going to America to start a new lifestyle stayed in third class. After the sinking, all the people had lost most of their money and belongings and were not able to reimburse all of it, even with the insurance they had purchased. Although the Titanic was mostly a passenger liner, she also carried a substantial amount of cargo (mostly mail). The Titanic had nine decks (A-G). The lifeboats were positioned on the boat deck. A Deck was reserved for first class passengers and first class cabins. B Deck was reserved as an extension for first class. C and E deck were reserved for third class passengers and crew members. G Deck was used for storage of mail and food and F Deck was used for second class passengers. The captain of the Titanic was Captain Edward Smith. The Titanic's measurements were 882 feet 6 inches in length and 175 feet tall. The Titanic even had a gymnasium and swimming pool for people to relax. After the remaining passengers got to New York on the Carpathia (neighboring ship near where the Titanic sank), some people could walk off themselves and others could not because of the freezing water their feet were in. The Titanic stayed above water for 2 hours and 40 minutes before finally sinking into the Atlantic Ocean. The government set up a meeting a couple weeks later discussing about going to where the Titanic sank and taking pictures underwater to try to retrieve items from the wreckage. Since the tragedy, biologists were able to recover 5,500 objects from the site.

I liked this book very much. I liked it because it told me more facts about the Titanic from that night and gave direct quotes from what people were saying during this time of tragedy. It made me think about being grateful for what I have and own because people that survived the sinking lost almost everything since they were going to the United States to start a new life. I would recommend this book to any teenager who wants to know more information about the sinking of the Titanic.

-Alex , Teen Reviewer



Peet, Mal. Tamar a Novel of Espionage Passion and Betrayal 420 p.

Recommended for 7th grade and older

Historical Fiction

The first thing you should know about Tamar A Novel of Espionage and Betrayal is that there are 2 Tamars: 1995 Tamar is a 15 year old girl, while 1945 Tamar is a Dutch resistance fighter in Nazi-occupied Holland. The story jumps back and forth between 1945 Holland and 1995 England, where we first meet the young girl.



1995 Tamar is coping with the suicide of her grandfather and her grandmother's mental decline. Tamar's grandfather left her a box on her bed containing mysterious photos and maps. In visiting the places circled on the maps, she learns about the existence of 1945 Tamar and that her grandfather is not the man she thought he was.

1945 Tamar goes undercover as a farm worker to help organize the Dutch resistance against the Nazis. Tamar is his code name; he goes by Christian Boogart. He loves Marijke, the young girl whose family owns the farm. Tamar's spy associates Koop de Vries and Dart think that his love affair with Marijke is compromising Tamar's devotion to the Resistance. Tensions between the three spies and the girl come to a head in a conflict that will cut their group of four down to two. What role did 1995 Tamar's grandfather play in these events? She searches to learn whether the grandfather she knew was a hero or a villain and whether his entire life with their family was a lie.

I would recommend this book to other people because the story line was very interesting and felt like you were included in every scene. 1995 Tamar finally learns the truth about her grandfather in a shocking twist in the final chapter. The book became more intriguing when the author switched back and forth between time periods in a way that lets you piece the puzzle together yourself. If you liked *The Book Thief* you would most likely enjoy *Tamar* because both books concern themselves with secrets and both take place during World War 2.

Review by Matthew